



# Municipality of Anchorage

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Mayor Mark Begich

## Planning Department

February 27, 2006

Mr. Randy Bates, Director  
Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
Office of Project Management & Permitting  
400 Willoughby Avenue  
Juneau, AK 99801-1796

RE: Request for Review and Approval of Revised  
*Anchorage Coastal Management Plan*

Dear Mr. Bates:

The Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) requests your agency's review and approval of the Final Draft *Anchorage Coastal Management Plan* Amendment.

Each of the attached four CD-ROMs contains digital copies of:

- Final Draft Plan Amendment
- Copy of (draft) resolution of support from the MOA Planning and Zoning Commission
- Public distribution mailing list
- Names of parties that provided comments
- Copies of comments received
- Copies of the minutes or summary of any public meetings held
- Written documentation of consultation with state and federal agencies.

This amendment is a complete revision of the *Anchorage Coastal Management Plan*, which was originally adopted in the early 1980s. This final draft plan includes the following required elements:

- Enforceable Policies Cross-Reference Table
- Issues, Goals, and Objectives
- Plan Organization
- Coastal Zone Boundary and Designations
- Resource Inventory and Analysis
- Subject Uses and Activities
- Proper and Improper Uses and Activities

*Community, Security, Prosperity*

- District Enforceable Policies
- Implementation
- Public Participation
- Appendices A – F

A summary discussion of the plan's intent and the Municipality's designations and enforceable policies is provided for your review and edification.

The Anchorage Plan has been prepared to comply with the amended Alaska Coastal Management Act and regulations adopted in 2004. New state regulations require that the MOA assign designations to lands, waters, or resources within its coastal boundary in order to apply enforceable policies. These policies ensure that the MOA has local input on proposed development in or adjacent to those coastal resources within the designations. The MOA has designated the lands and waters within its coastal boundary as a Recreation Use Area. Within the Recreation Use Designation, the Anchorage Plan designates a subarea as Important Habitat.

Valuable watersheds, wetlands, uplands, streams, lakes, and coastal waters within the designations are essential resources that define the quality of the MOA's coastal environment. Local usage, along with known, mapped and documented physical, biological, and cultural attributes upon which recreation use depends, are detailed in local, state, and federal plans, studies, and publications. The biological productivity and significance of the designated Important Habitat Areas have been documented with a GIS-based sensitivity model, which was used to update the *Anchorage Coastal Atlas*. The new Plan's enforceable policies provide specific management measures for uses and activities that impact or have the potential to impact the special biological productivity of resources within the Important Habitat Designation.

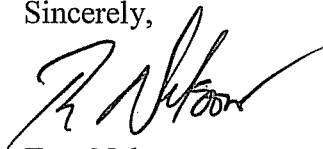
The plan specifically addresses a number of land use issues including coastal development and coastal access. The Statewide Standard for coastal development directs coastal districts to prioritize uses and activities in their coastal boundaries based on whether these are water-dependent, water-related, or neither water-dependent nor water-related but without an inland alternative. These state categories are broadly defined. The MOA presents enforceable policies that define which uses or activities fall into each of the three categories and adds specificity to an otherwise broad standard. Through the resource analysis exercise, the Anchorage Plan further classifies certain streams, lakes, uplands, and wetlands within the MOA coastal zone (via the Plan's two designations) as areas of unique concern and value to the community. Through the Municipality's modeling, these resources have been shown to be the most sensitive to development. Anchorage's enforceable policies linked to these unique and valuable coastal resources provide a level of specificity not found in state or federal regulations.

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The Statewide Standard for coastal access is similarly broadly defined. This Plan continues Anchorage's long-term goal and focus on public coastal access. The new Plan's enforceable policies related to this standard address maintenance and protection of public access to, from, and along Anchorage's coast. State and federal regulations that deal with public access are strictly limited to lands within a state or federal agency's jurisdiction. While Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act regulates access to coastal water bodies, this federal law does not address issues of local concern unique to the Municipality of Anchorage. State and federal laws do not specify where and how access may occur nor do they include provision to address negative impacts that may result from public access.

We believe that our plan meets the requirements and the intent of the regulations regarding coastal district plans. The Anchorage Plan includes details and specificity relative to unique local matters that are otherwise not adequately addressed in state or federal regulations. We look forward to working with you to complete the approval process for this plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Nelson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Nelson  
Planning Director

Attachment: 2006 Municipality of Anchorage Coastal Management Plan Final Draft Amendment